

Oh Christmas Tree, Oh Christmas Tree by HisokaTrash

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****Adult Reddie au****

“This is it, this is the one!”

Richie pushed through the branches of the Christmas trees - the very

tasteful and of decent size Christmas trees - and felt his jaw drop when he beheld the behemoth that Eddie was excitedly jumping around. "Eds, you're joking."

"Not at all!" Eddie said, he practically squealed like a goddamn kid. Now he hopped from one foot to the other, like his excitement was something physical that he couldn't contain. "This is the one I want, Richie. This one. Please!"

OR, Eddie is extremely excited for Christmas and Richie can't figure out why.

Huge shout out to @winterfyres and @Haderh0e on twitter for the prompts! I love them to death and you should give them a follow!

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Author's Note:

Happy holidays!

Welcome to the 12 Days of Reddie! For the next 12 days, until Christmas, you'll be getting back-to-back Reddie Christmas drabbles! That's right, for the next TWELVE DAYS! I've made my list, checked it twice, and everyone was nice! So here's my early gift to you! Enjoy!

Check out my twitter @Kingkaspbrak for updates, or just to say hi!

“This is it, this is the one!”

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“I-.” Richie didn’t even think that would fit in the house, let alone strapped to Eddie’s SUV. “Baby, where would we put that? How are we going to take it home? And stop fucking jumping, you’re going to trigger your asthma and I need you to help me carry this.”

Eddie reluctantly stopped jumping - and, admittedly, the cold air was already making his throat seize up, jumping probably wasn’t helping - but he smiled anyway. Richie had given valid reasoning for *not* getting the tree, but at the end of the day Eddie was confident that they’d be bringing it home anyway. He knew which buttons to push, and by saying he’d need Eddie’s help to carry it he’d basically admitted defeat already. He tilted his head, and gave Richie those irresistible puppy-dog eyes. “Richie, darling, love of my life, *this* is

the one.”

God fucking dammit. “Okay, Eds. Give me a second.” Richie disappeared into the Christmas trees again and pulled out his phone. After scrolling for a minute, and silently cursing Eddie’s puppy-dog eyes, he found Mike’s number and dialed. “Hey, buddy. I need a favor.”

About an hour later, Mike and Bill had the tree - affectionately dubbed Groot XL by Richie - strapped onto Mike’s truck, and were driving back to Eddie and Richie’s house. Eddie’s SUV was behind them, and through the rear-view mirror they could see Eddie absolutely showering Richie with kisses.

“Thank you, thank you, thank you!” Eddie was gushing, practically vibrating in his seat with adoration and excitement. “Thank you, Richie!”

Which struck Richie as odd. Casually, he said, “Eddie, as much as I love your kisses, and I truly do they are my life force and never stop, but we’re going to get into a crash if you keep distracting me. Let’s try to stay alive long enough to decorate Groot, okay?”

“Fine. But hurry up. I can’t wait to start.”

The week prior, Eddie had blown the bank at Williams Sonoma on the most *lavish* Christmas decorations money could buy. The saleswoman had taken one look at him, and latched onto his side with a glee that Richie previously believed only belonged to cult zealots. Two hours later, and they were making multiple trips to and from the car and store. Eddie’s SUV was stuffed with decorations, bobbles, glitter, tinsel, icy looking sculptures, shiny ornaments, tiny polar bears and penguins, and anything else that even vaguely resembled Christmas. Richie had only barely been able to talk him out of the model train set. It was borderline insanity, the hype with which Eddie was preparing for Christmas. Richie didn’t understand it.

“Eddie, is there any particular reason why you’re going coo coo for cocoa puffs over all of this?” Richie asked. “It makes me so happy to see you so happy, but it’s just Christmas. You’re forty years old, it definitely isn’t your first. Also, don’t thank me for the Christmas tree.

It's your house as much as mine, and the decision definitely wasn't up to me."

Something closed off in Eddie's face, which Richie nearly missed. Eddie glanced out the passenger window to avoid Richie scrutinizing him too closely. There were plenty of contributing factors to his excitement, but there was an overall one that he wasn't ready to talk about. Maybe soon, maybe later, maybe never. "This is our first Christmas since... everything in Derry. Aren't you excited about that?"

"I guess," Richie said. He knew Eddie too well; he was obviously avoiding the question. But he didn't push. Eddie would open up to him when he was ready.

Whenever that'd be.

Somehow, defying the laws of physics, they managed to get Groot XL inside the house and upright. They lost several pine needles in the process, which littered the floor, but the ordeal was overwhelmingly successful.

"Mike, I owe you big time," Richie smiled, hugging him tightly. "Seriously."

"Don't mention it, Richie, we love you guys," Mike said, squeezing him back. "Besides, I'd much rather help you move a Christmas tree than, say, play strip monopoly."

Richie had the decency to blush, which made Mike laugh harder. He slapped Richie across the back jovially, and shook his head. "I'm messing. But seriously, don't mention it. We'll leave you two to decorate that monster. Good luck."

"Thanks, Mikey," Richie repeated. Mike raised a hand in a *Don't mention it!* Gesture, and went to collect Bill. In the living room, Bill

and Eddie were sweeping up pine needles. Eddie swept them, and Bill held the dustpan steady.

“Hey, love, you ready?” Mike asked.

Bill stood up, brushing his hands on his jeans. “Sure, we’re just finished up here.”

“Thank you guys for all the help,” Eddie enthused. “We’re on track to make this the best Christmas ever.”

Bill smiled. “No problem. We love you guys, and we’re more than happy to help. We’ll see you two tomorrow?”

“For sure, I’ll walk you guys out,” Richie said, and followed the two of them down the hall. When he returned to the living room, Eddie had every single bag from Williams Sonoma carefully set around the Christmas tree, and was gently pawing through each one. Groot XL was already wrapped with silver garlands and a strand of red twinkling lights. He was deciding between starting with the ornaments, or hanging fairy lights around the living room, when he saw Richie walk in.

“Babe, I’ve been gone five minutes and this place already looks like Saint Nick vomited everywhere,” Richie said, slightly in awe.

“Well, I’m not done yet,” Eddie said flatly. “Trust me, this is a work in progress. Now, can you hang these on the tree? I have to put these fairy lights up, and start hanging the stockings.” He pointed out two bags, and then scooped up a box of lights and Command Hooks. “This place is gonna look like a winter wonderland when we’re through.”

Oh, Christ. “Okay, it certainly sounds like you’ve made up your mind about this. Anyway I can convince you to maybe tone it down? Just a little? It’s just Christmas, baby.”

Something flashed across Eddie’s eyes, something similar to what had ran across his face earlier, in the car. Again, Richie couldn’t quite pin it down. But, he didn’t like it. He quickly backtracked. “Never mind. Just tell me what to do, and I’ll work my magic to perfect your creative vision.”

Eddie felt himself deflate. At least Richie wasn't picking at it, because that would've caused a fight that he didn't want to have. "Sure. Use the blue ornaments above the silver garland, and the gold ones above the red lights. Try to keep them in line so they're even, okay?"

"Awesome. Perfect. Can do. Richie is on top of it." He was not on top of it, but he would try his damndest. For Eddie, and for whatever it was that he was obviously trying to repress. He pulled the bags closer, and pulled out a carefully packaged box of glittering gold ornaments. Cracking open the box, he hung the first three above the red lights, and the next three above the garland. Artistic, yet bold. Richie was pleased with this design choice, and continued alternating them, adding in the blue ornaments.

Eddie was heavily preoccupied with hanging the lights - what height was ideal? How did you make them hang so it looked casual, yet intricately planned? - so he didn't immediately notice what was going on behind him.

"So, Eds, what is your ultimate Christmas wish this year? What is the one thing you're asking for from Santa? I've got friends over in the North Pole, so I could totally fast track any of your desires. That is, if you've been nice."

Asshole. Eddie rolled his eyes. "Right. Well, tell Santa that the only thing I want is for you to stop calling me Eds. Can he do that?"

"Sorry. No can do. Anything else?"

"Hm. I'd love to know who your secret elf informant is."

"Easy. Bill. He's short enough to be an elf. C'mon, ask me for something good, Eddie!"

"Well, I'd love - Richie, what are you *doing*? " Eddie climbed down from the stepladder and rushed over to the tree. "That's not what I said at all! Why did you mix the ornaments like that?"

"Artistic freedom?" Richie said, and then winced at the dark look Eddie gave him. "Yikes, okay. I thought your design was a little stiff, honey. Christmas trees aren't supposed to be these perfect, planned

projects. Otherwise, we'd have gotten Ben and his genius mind to sketch out a design..."

"That is *not* how architecture works, Richie."

"...they're supposed to be a crazy patchwork of decorations that you put together with the people you love. As a family, you know."

"No, Richie. I don't know." Eddie's voice had a treacherous quality to it, and Richie wanted to press but didn't want to push him. He opened his mouth to say something, but Eddie spoke over him. "Never mind. I'll fix it later. Just, put those garlands on the fireplace, and hang the stockings. Okay?"

"Sure, baby," Richie said quietly. What had just happened? They definitely hadn't fought, but it sure felt like it. There was a defeated little sag to Eddie's shoulders as he climbed back up the stepladder and hung the lights, and Richie felt like the biggest asshole in the world.

They spent the next ten minutes in silence.

"Eddie, baby, I'm sorry," Richie finally said. "I'm really sorry. I don't know what just happened, but I'm sorry that it did. You're right, this is our first Christmas since Derry and we deserve to have a happy one. I'm gonna get us some hot chocolate, and then we're gonna talk about this. However much you feel comfortable with sharing. I'll be right back."

As Richie left, Eddie climbed down the stepladder and sat back on the couch. Richie was really trying, and he loved him terribly for it. The problem wasn't because of him - unless it involved one of his half-baked schemes, it very rarely was - but it *was* one of those shiny little nuggets wrapped in childhood trauma that he didn't feel ready to unwrap.

Of course, he would have to face it at some point or another, and Richie deserved to know. The further they got into this month, the worse it would get...

Richie walked back into the living room with two steaming mugs,

and handed one to Eddie as he sat beside him. Eddie took the mug, and noticed that Richie had put extra marshmallows in it. Eddie liked to put extra in when he wasn't feeling well, and Richie had gone ahead and done it without being asked. He smiled a little to himself, wrapped his hands around the warmth, and leaned into Richie's side.

Richie didn't say anything. If he knew anything about Eddie, and he liked to think he was the world's leading expert, it was that he'd get into the problem unprompted. They sat like that for awhile, silently enjoying each other's company.

The hot chocolate had gone cold before the silence was broken.

"My mom didn't let me celebrate," Eddie said quietly. "At least not properly. We never got a tree, or decorated the house, or made cookies. She thought that I'd be allergic to the pine needles, or that I'd break an ornament and step on the broken glass. For her, Christmas was a hazard wrapped up with a bow - a bow I'd choke on, probably. I never got to do any of that traditional Christmas jazz.

"You said earlier that this isn't my first Christmas. You're right, technically. But, in a way, it totally is. I get to do all the stuff my mom never let me, with the man I love. This is a dream come true, baby. I *never* thought I'd get a real Christmas with you. I know I'm being a super-freak about it, but that's just because I want it to be perfect."

Oh. That actually made a lot of sense. Of course Eddie wouldn't have had a normal Christmas, his mom was psycho! Now his manic behavior made much more sense - he was literally a kid at his first Christmas, and he wanted everything to be just so.

Richie kissed the top of Eddie's head. "Thank you for telling me."

"Thank you for understanding."

"Listen. I'll fix the tree. We'll spruce this place up exactly as you imagined it, and have the most picturesque Christmas in the goddamn world. We'll even take one of those family Christmas cards and send 'em to the gang. How does that sound?"

Eddie smiled, and surprised himself by tearing up. "That sounds almost perfect. Except for the tree. Let's keep it the way you've put it, and finish it together."

Richie opened his mouth to protest, but Eddie cut across him. "No. You were right. I don't want a rigid Christmas - I want a crazy patchwork tree with a crazy patchwork Christmas. With you."

Richie cupped Eddie's face gently, using his thumbs to brush away his tears. "Well, that sounds just swell, Eddie Spaghetti, just swell."

Eddie let Richie decorate the tree however he wanted, as long as they did it together, and it was the most disorganized, hectic, patchwork tree in the history of Christmas trees. Eddie loved it. Richie carefully unpacked the star, and carried it into the study.

"I'll be right back, babe."

Eddie didn't pay much attention to him, but instead focused on hanging the stockings. The first one was Richie's, the second one - and he should *never* have asked Richie to buy these, what a stupid mistake that had been - lovingly said "Eddie Spaghetti." Ugh. With a grudging smile, he hung up the other stocking and decorated the mantle with garland.

Richie came back in, holding the star behind his back, and quickly ran over to the tree. There was a giddy smile on his face, which Eddie didn't appreciate. "What did you do, Richie?"

"Nothing. Keep hanging that garland, love."

Eddie did, if only because he didn't want to argue. When he finished, he stood back to admire the living room. The fireplace was perfect, the room was surrounded in fairy lights, and the tree - Groot XL - was everything he had pictured it to be. Except for...

"Richie. Did you... put a picture of me on the star?"

"I did!" Richie sounded outrageously proud. "Isn't that great? A star on the star."

Eddie felt his heart warm. Richie was so fucking stupid, and he

absolutely loved him with every fiber of his being. “This is really great. Thank you, Richie.”

“Thank *you* . For teaching me the true meaning of Christmas.”

“You ruined it. Jackass.”

Richie laughed, and swung his arm around Eddie’s shoulders. “I think this is going to be the best Christmas ever.”